

Las Palmas, but besides some Common Curlews, which are decidedly rare in the Canaries, nothing of note appeared.

I am sorry to have no more islands to go to, and am afraid that, with the exception of the Petrels, nothing much remains to be done; but to observe these satisfactorily, it would be necessary to visit and carefully work the outer islands and rocks during the months of June and July, and I have no greater wish than to do this, accompanied by my energetic friend and mentor Canon Tristram.

XLIV.—*Notes on some Birds obtained at Madeira, Deserta Grande, and Porto Santo.* By W. R. OGILVIE GRANT (Nat. Hist. Mus.).

(Plate XIV.)

It was my good fortune to be invited during the spring of this year to accompany a friend on a five weeks' trip to Madeira, and, having never visited that beautiful island, I gladly embraced the opportunity, and determined, if possible, to obtain there a number of birds which were much wanted for the British Museum Collection. I certainly never dreamed of finding anything new, least of all in the bird-line, and the handsome new Sparrow-Hawk so excellently delineated by Mr. Keulemans in the accompanying Plate was an unexpected surprise.

After a terribly rough voyage from start to finish, we arrived in a somewhat battered condition at Funchal on the 15th of April, truly thankful to find ourselves once more on firm land, where, in the glorious sunshine and delightful climate of that most favoured island, our troubles were soon forgotten. The weather, owing to the late spring, was still all that could be desired, and not too hot to make walking unpleasant. Almost the whole of the three weeks we remained at Madeira were spent in making expeditions in all directions, and combined a very large amount of exercise with a thorough enjoyment of the grand scenery and the delights of collecting zoological specimens of all kinds, though

principally birds. At the end of our stay I found that I had got together a very satisfactory series of birds, a list of which is given below, along with some notes. We had also obtained a number of lizards and many examples of land and fresh-water Mollusca, Myriopoda (including two specimens of a new species of *Geophilus*), Arachnida, Coleoptera, Lepidoptera, and Vermes.

The town of Funchal does not boast of a taxidermist, and one is thus dependent on one's own exertions in the skinning-line. Thus I soon found that, even by getting up every morning at six and working for a couple of hours or more, it was impossible to keep pace with the day's results. I was therefore obliged to put a number of specimens in spirit, and on my return sent them to Mr. Cullingford at Durham, who returned them transformed into most beautiful skins, quite as good as if they had been made from fresh specimens.

A. *Specimens from Madeira.*

1. ACCIPITER GRANTI, Sharpe. (Plate XIV.)

Accipiter granti, Sharpe, Ann. & Mag. N. H. ser. 6, v. p. 485.

The only specimen as yet obtained of this very handsome Sparrow-Hawk was got by my friends Messrs. C. J. Cossart and C. Hinton while shooting Partridges in October last year. The former of these gentlemen showed me the skin, together with some other specimens in his possession, and I at once felt sure that it was distinct from anything I had ever seen; but never having made a special study of the Hawk-tribe, I thought I could not do better than place the bird in the hands of my friend Mr. Sharpe and leave the responsibility of describing it or not to him. He at once pronounced it to be a very distinct insular form, most nearly allied to the Madagascar Sparrow-Hawk, *Accipiter madagascariensis*, from which it is only to be distinguished by possessing rufous flank-tufts, like *A. nisus*. My own opinion is that *A. granti* is the resident bird which breeds in the island, and that the common Sparrow-Hawks obtained there are visitors only. It has been denied that the Sparrow-Hawk breeds in Madeira, but this has been proved to be incorrect, as

I am informed by Mr. Cossart that a clutch of eggs, taken on the island, were shown him by a gentleman residing in Funchal. There is a popular superstition in Madeira that the Sparrow-Hawk is the outcome of the fifth egg in the "Mantas" or Common Buzzard's nest! During my stay I saw a number of Sparrow-Hawks, but never had an opportunity of obtaining any specimens, as the chances of getting them always occurred while I was temporarily disarmed in pursuit of some other branch of zoology. Some of the birds seen were undoubtedly only *A. nisus*, but two, at least, I believe to have been specimens of *A. granti*, judging from the hurried glimpses I had of them. I should imagine that the resident birds were not nearly so numerous as the visitors. Mr. Cossart tells me that what first drew his attention to this Hawk was its peculiar flight, just topping the bushes, like a tired or wounded bird, and it was this that made him and Mr. Hinton give chase and procure it. As he had never seen so large a Sparrow-Hawk, and as it was a particularly fine one, he fortunately brought it home and skinned it.

2. *STRIX FLAMMEA*.

3. *PHYLLOSCOPUS SIBILATRIX*.

Four specimens, which undoubtedly belong to this species, were obtained by me in a garden a few miles from Funchal. I was first attracted to the bird by its note, which was perfectly different from that of any Wood-Wren I had ever heard at home. When I had remained quiet for some minutes, I found there were several of these birds dodging about in a very thick hedge, and every now and then darting out among the apple-trees in pursuit of some insects. It would have been easy to get more specimens, as there were at least a dozen. I never saw them anywhere else, and suppose they had only touched there on their way north.

4. *SYLVIA ATRICAPILLA*.

5. *SYLVIA HEINEKENI*.

6. *SYLVIA MELANOCEPHALA*.

I shot a pair a mile or so north of Santa Cruz, in some thick furze-bushes, but never saw them anywhere else.

7. ERITHACUS RUBECULA.

8. TURDUS MERULA.

9. REGULUS MADERENSIS.

Common in suitable localities all over the island. It is not met with in altitudes much below 2000 feet, and prefers the gigantic heath-trees which clad the steep rugged sides of the Serras, where it is met with in small parties.

10. MOTACILLA MELANOPE.

11. ANTHUS BERTHELOTI.

12. LINOTA CANNABINA.

This species was nesting. I found a nest with young.

13. CRITHAGRA BUTYRACEA.

This bird had already nested, and many of the young were already flying about.

14. PETRONIA PETRONIA.

Very common about the cliffs and houses near the sea.

15. FRINGILLA MADERENSIS.

There has been so much discussion with regard to the advisability of separating the various forms of Buff-breasted Chaffinch found in Madeira and the Canary Islands, that I took care to obtain a good series of these birds in the former island. Thanks to the kindness of Mr. Meade-Waldo and Canon Tristram, I have been able to inspect their large series of specimens from the different islands of the Canaries, and I entirely agree with Mr. Sharpe as to the advisability of giving these forms distinct names. All the young are undoubtedly much the same, but the adults are perfectly distinct, except the form found in Hierro, which is somewhat intermediate between *F. canariensis* and *F. palmæ*, having the back and rump somewhat intermixed with green. On the whole, however, this bird is so close to the grey-backed *F. palmæ*, that it is certainly most reasonable and convenient to unite it with that species. The "buff-breasted" species may be distinguished in the adult state by the following characters:—

- a. *F. maderensis*, Sharpc.—Pale slate-coloured head; mantle green; back slate; rump and upper tail-coverts green. Breast pinkish. (Madeira.)
- b. *F. moreleti*, Pucher.—As the last, but black frontal band stronger. Breast buff, never pinkish. (Azores.)
- c. *F. canariensis*, Vieill. (*F. tintillon*, W. & B.).—Head, mantle, and back dark slate-blue; rump and upper tail-coverts green; breast and belly buff. (Grand Canary, Teneriffe, and Gomera.)
- d. *F. palmæ*, Meade-Waldo.—Whole of back and rump slate-blue; breast and belly pure white. (Palma and Hierro.)

16. CUCULUS CANORUS.

17. COLUMBA TROCAZ.

I was fortunate enough to get eight specimens of this fine Pigeon, which is still fairly common in the north of the island.

18. NUMENIUS PHÆOPUS.

19. TOTANUS CALIDRIS. -

20. MACHETES PUGNAX.

21. TRINGA ALPINA.

22. STREPSILAS INTERPRES.

23. ARDETTA MINUTA.

+ 24. STERNA DOUGALLI.

B. *Specimens from Deserta Grande.*

About twenty-five miles to the south-east of Madeira lies a group of rocky volcanic islands known as the Desertas, and it was our great desire to visit these before leaving Madeira, and, if possible, to obtain specimens of certain Petrels which breed there. The group consists of a chain of three islands connected by numerous small rocks. The middle island, known as Deserta Grande, is the largest, being about 9 miles long and $1\frac{1}{2}$ wide, and is the only one on which it is

possible to land for anyone not born a native fisherman. The little Deserta, which lies to the north, is flat-topped and about 1000 feet high, and only to be ascended, we believe, by means of ropes; while the middle Deserta, which is the most southern, rises in wild peaks, and is said to be quite inaccessible. By the kind invitation of some of our Madeira friends, who had made up a party to shoot goats on Deserta Grande, we joined their expedition, and started about 2 o'clock on the morning of the 4th of May, and, both wind and sea being favourable, landed on the island without difficulty about 6 o'clock. The landing-place, the only one on the island, is merely a table of rock, covered with huge blocks of loose stone, quite unapproachable in rough weather; the rest of the island rises sheer up from the sea to a height of from one to two thousand feet. The ascent to the higher level is just above the place where one lands, and is a narrow steep zigzag path up a nearly perpendicular face; but the climb is simple compared with the descent, which in parts is far from pleasant, the loose volcanic earth and stones giving way at every step, and often going unpleasantly near the heads of those in front. On gaining the summit one emerges into a valley, which furrows the centre of the island, and is covered with rough grass and white poppies, scattered stones and boulders. Among these we soon unearthed several pairs of Bulwer's Petrel, which, however, had not then begun to breed. Underneath some of the stones we caught a number of specimens of the great black Tarantula (*Lycosa nigra*) peculiar to the Desertas. We may remark that there is no water whatever on the islands, and my friends had to bring all their drinking-water with them in barrels, which were carried up by the fishermen employed to drive the goats. These latter, now perfectly wild, together with numerous rabbits and black cats, are the only quadrupeds, and are the descendants of animals introduced when the island was inhabited by Portuguese fishermen. The only shelter on the whole place consists of two small clumps of stone-pine near the middle of the island, and here we found Canaries and Linnets in plenty, also a Redstart and a pair or two of Golden Orioles :

one of these was shot, but it fell over the cliff and was lost. We returned to Madeira the same evening, and the birds obtained were the following:—

1. CRITHAGRA BUTYRACEA.

2. LINOTA CANNABINA.

A nest with young.

3. THALASSIDROMA BULWERI.

We caught a number of pairs in holes among the stones, but they had not yet begun to breed. Bill and feet black; tarsi greyish pink. Iris deep brown.

+ 4. PUFFINUS KUHLI.

Also paired, but no eggs. They defended themselves fiercely and bit with great power. Legs and feet pale pink, outer toe and web dusky. Bill dull yellow, darker towards the tip. Iris dark brown.

+ 5. PUFFINUS OBSCURUS.

Only one specimen caught, an adult female, which had not bred. It seems curious that at Porto Santo, which is only about forty miles distant, this species had not only bred, but that some of the young were in nearly adult plumage. The bill is lead-coloured; the outer toe, sole, and back of tarsus black, rest livid. Eye dark brown.

We were unfortunate in obtaining no specimens of either *Æstelata mollis* or *Pelagodroma marina*.

6. LARUS LEUCOPHÆUS.

C. *Specimens from Lime Island, Porto Santo.*

The three islands of Porto Santo lie north-east of Madeira, and, like the Desertas, consist of three main islands, from one of which, known as the Lime Island, we obtained some interesting specimens. This island contains lime-quarries, and supplies all the lime used for building purposes in Madeira; before their discovery it had all to be brought from great distances by ship, and was so expensive that the older houses in Funchal are built with mud and merely faced with lime. The two birds obtained were:—

† 1. *THALASSIDROMA BULWERI*.† 2. *PUFFINUS OBSCURUS*.

By the kind help of our friend Mr. C. F. R. Blandy, to whom we are indebted for many of our pleasant trips, we got a very interesting series of the young of this species, showing every stage from the downy nestling to the adult. The down is first cast off the middle of the back and shoulders, then off the top of the head and throat, next from the whole of the upper parts. After this stage the breast becomes bare, then the belly and underparts, leaving only the flanks and tail-feathers with a downy fringe, which, in the most adult of the young specimens before us, is reduced to a few filaments on the flanks. The plumage of this last bird differs in nowise from that of the parent.

XLV.—*Notices of recent Ornithological Publications.*

[Continued from p. 383.]

80. *The British Museum Report for 1890.*

[Return to an Order of the Honourable The House of Commons, dated 5th May, 1890; for, Account “of the Income and Expenditure of the British Museum (Special Trust Funds) for the Year ending the 31st day of March 1890.” “And, Return of the Number of Persons admitted to visit the Museum and the British Museum (Natural History) in each Year for 1884 to 1889, both Years inclusive; together with a Statement of the Progress made in the Arrangement and Description of the Collections, and an Account of Objects added to them, in the Year 1889.”]

The Parliamentary Report on the British Museum for the present Session announces the addition of more than 69,000 specimens to the National Zoological Collection. Amongst these are specially noticed:—

(1) “A collection made by H. C. V. Hunter, Esq., in the Kilimanjaro district. It comprises twenty-five Mammals, including the type of *Damalis hunteri*; one hundred and eighty-six birds, amongst which are types of six new species and of nine species new to the collection; a new fish (*Oreochromis hunteri*) from one of the crater-lakes; two hundred

